

EXHIBIT 4
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224

**SB 224 Testimony on behalf of the
Montana Bureau of Land Management**

March 21, House Judiciary Committee

To: House Judiciary Committee Members

From: State Director Gene Terland, Bureau of Land Management

Re: SB 224

Chairperson Rice and members of the Judiciary Committee, for the record my name is Marilyn Krause, Legislative Liaison for the Bureau of Land Management and I am presenting this testimony on behalf of Gene Terland, State Director.

BLM supports SB 224 with the original language of public land rather than the narrower focus of State lands and waters. Where 'State lands' are specified in the bill, BLM would suggest expanding the wording to "State lands and federal public lands" and here is why.

- Authorizing FWP wardens and park rangers to enforce state laws related to minors in possession, misdemeanor possession of dangerous drugs, disorderly conduct and public nuisance at federal sites would enhance the law enforcement efforts and level of cooperation between the State wardens and federal BLM law enforcement officers.
- The nature of Montana's land management pattern is one of intermingled ownership. Often recreationists don't know whose site they are recreating at – they simply want to get to river to fish or float, camp on public land, or have a picnic with the family. The intermingled land pattern is a challenge for law enforcement with different authorities – consider the mixed ownership along the Blackfoot, Missouri, and Madison River corridors and other areas of Montana – if illegal activity is taking place, it's helpful for the closest law enforcement to respond. State law currently authorizes BLM law

enforcement to act as ex-officio game wardens. It seems to be a win-win situation that works.

- This authority will become more important in the future as recreation sites are cooperatively managed. Just before Memorial Day BLM will open the new White SandyCG on Hauser Lake adjacent to Montana's Black Sandy CG. It will be managed under a cooperative agreement between BLM and FWP, but the park ranger will be a FWP employee. It only makes sense that that employee could enforce laws in the BLM campground along with the FWP campground.
- When BLM law enforcement detains juveniles, they need to appear before a federal district judge – sometimes a good distance away. Juveniles detained by State law enforcement appear before a local state court – often times saving time, stress, and money for the juvenile and their family.

In conclusion, BLM would like to go on record of support SB 224 with the change in wording.